

In the writer's Compliments

93

LETTERS AND EXTRACTS

—ON—

31

THE RIEL QUESTION.

WITH NOTES

—BY—

THE HONORABLE DR. McMILLAN.

"Safety and equal Government, are things
Which subjects make as happy as their kings."
—Waller.

ALEXANDER.

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF "THE GLENGARRIAN."

"Safety and equal Government, are things,
Which subjects make, as happy as their kings."

—Waller.

TO THE FREE AND INDEPENDENT ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY
OF GLENGARRY.

GENTLEMEN:

Lord Mansfield, in an important debate in the House of Lords, in England, in the year 1770, used these memorable words: "True liberty, in my opinion, can only exist where justice is equally administered to all, to the king and to the subject," and it is much to be regretted, that in the noon-tide of the nineteenth century, with the experience, knowledge and opportunities we have had, as well as the lessons we have learned from history, that the principles and maxims embodied in the above quotation are not more closely observed and practiced in Canada.

I am led to the above conclusion by the attempt that is being made to drag into the arena, perhaps soon to be held, a subject much to be deplored by every true Canadian. I mean the execution of Louis Riel, subverting and destroying as it does, the political issues and lines of the two parties, which affect the welfare and prosperity of the Country, and substituting therefor one of religious and national antipathy, with its consequent strifes, struggles, bitterness and bad feeling, just to serve for a time as a means by which the party led by the Honorable Edward Blake may be placed in power.

Here is an extract from a speech which the Hon. Mr. Laurier delivered at the meeting on Champ de Mars, as reported in *La Patrie* of the 26th November, 1895:

"Henceforth there will be neither Liberals nor Conservatives; only the great national party composed of the old Liberals and the old Conservatives."

Again let me give an extract from a paper called *La Presse* of the 16th November, 1895, which is as follows:

"From this day we can consider all the old political division of party as having ceased to exist in Lower Canada. When nationality is outraged and menaced, there can no longer be Liberals or Conservatives, there can be but the party of patriots. Henceforth, there are but two parties, the national party and the hanging party."

A sense of duty which I feel I owe to the people of my native county, and an earnest desire that the grossly distorted facts and wicked misrepresentations, in connection with the recent insurrection in the North West, impels me to briefly recapitulate the leading events in the incipency of the trouble in order that the electors of Glengarry may have a fair idea of Riel's responsibility and the freedom from all real blame in which the Government must be held by right thinking and honest men.

I may say at the outset that as one holding Her Majesty's commission in the Province of Canada, I cannot be fairly accused of having addressed you for any personal or party advancement, I have "no axe to grind." But while I claim this, I feel it doubly incumbent upon me to lay down my responsibilities to you and to my country, but on the contrary, rather more incumbent on me, at a time when men's bitterest passions are aroused, and the dangerous consequences to our Constitution, that I should at least venture to appeal to the people of Glengarry, as lovers of their country, to crush out such insidious and unpatriotic attempts to gain a temporary advantage at the expense of law, order

and good Government—trampling under foot the idea that a Government is to be punished because it will not violate that essential principle to true liberty, that justice should "be equally administered to all."

To any ordinary observer, it became apparent from the day on which Louis Riel was taken prisoner near Batoche, till the day on which he was executed at Regina, that leading men of the Blake-Laurier party, and their organs, were prepared to make use of this question against Sir John Macdonald and his Government, whether this poor unfortunate man was found guilty or not, and if found guilty, whether his punishment would be that of imprisonment or death. The *Globe* said as much during the trial, that the whole proceedings would be only a sham, and that Sir John would go through the farce of trying Riel in order to please Ontario, but in the end that he would yield to Quebec influences and rob justice of its right. In its issue of July 24th, 1885, that paper said:

"The trial programme points in the one direction; hurry through the case. Remember that every moment the court is open there is danger that something may be blurted out that will damage the Government. Let the Judge somewhat brusquely set aside all objections, though every one of these may hold large material for an appeal. Let what many think are reasonable facilities for securing evidence for the defence be refused, and everything be proceeded with as if conviction were a foregone conclusion. Then what follows? A good case is made out on which Riel's friends and compatriots can say that the criminal has not had a fair trial. The Imperial Government can be worked upon to bring its influence to bear with Sir John Macdonald. Lord Salisbury will never dare to face the country without having first tried all he can to avoid the shedding, in British Territory of a surrendered rebel's blood. There will be sent to Sir John Macdonald a communication to the effect that, inasmuch as a large number of Her Majesty's subjects are of opinion that Riel's trial was unfairly conducted, therefore, it is Her Majesty's earnest wish that the criminal's life should be spared. Sir John will shelter himself behind Her Majesty, will reprove Riel, will 'wish to God he could catch him;' will point to the *Globe* in order to prove that he tried very hard to convict Riel, and every Tory politician in the land will be satisfied."

As soon as Riel was convicted, the same paper, with many others of the leading organs of that party, were clamoring for his blood. Here are a few extracts from the *Globe* prior to the execution:

"Nothing short of hanging for Riel will satisfy the people of this Province. If he does not get that it will be because the pistol has been put to Sir John's ear by French Canadian influence, and this should be a just and sufficient cause for Ontario to call a halt and demand a re-construction of the federal ship or a disunion. A French ascendancy is out of the question and not to be endured or tolerated."

At another time the *Globe* said:

"The English-speaking people will not much longer submit to French dictation. If Confederation is to be maintained intact, the laws must be impartially administered irrespective of nationality, color or religion; neither must one Province be allowed to bleed another, as is the case at present. Riel not only shed blood himself, but caused blood to be shed without having the slightest cause to do so. And not to hang such a villain is unpardonable. The demand made in Ontario is not a cry for vengeance, but a demand simply to let the law take its course on a notorious malefactor."

You will observe this quotation says, "caused blood to be shed without having the slightest cause to do so."

In October, 1885, it said:

"The *Globe* is not so wholly ignorant of latter-day Toryism as not to know that whatever is done with Riel, not one of those votes which Sir John Macdonald calls his own will be lost to him. Had Riel's plans for rising the Indians succeeded; had his second rebellion deluged the North-West with blood as at one time seemed possible; had there been 2,000 instead of 200 victims slaughtered; had the whole country been laid desolate, we know enough of the unprincipled gang which supports Sir John Macdonald to know that he would not have lost a vote in Parliament."

But just as soon as the law was allowed to take its course, we find the same paper changing its tone; it saw a chance of power in the distance, while other papers

belonged to the party were as loudly holding up the execution as unjust, murderous and more bitter than State lynching. I will give an extract again from the *Globe* :

"To refuse sympathy to our fellow-countrymen in Quebec, to hold that because they will not furnish the Government we will maintain it, would be almost an incredible instance of narrow-minded race prejudice and bigotry."

I will confine myself to the *Globe* here as it is my intention later on to show the opinions of this journal and other organs of the party before and after the execution.

The rebellion took place in a small section of the North-West, in the Saskatchewan District, on the South branch of the river which bears that name, bearing in extent about as much in proportion to the North West as the County of Glengarry does to the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. It contained two-hundred and fifty-eight settlers; among them were many half-breeds, or Metis as they are sometimes called, who had come from the Province of Manitoba, and who had been acquainted with Louis Riel before he left there after the rebellion of 1869-70, for the United States, where he had I believe, ever since resided, and had taken the oath of allegiance to that Country. Among these 258 settlers were also some white people. The Manitoba half-breeds had received their lands from the Government while in that Province, but sold them and moved to this part of the North-West, expecting that they would not be known and that they would receive a grant of land there also. Some of the white people who were speculators and land grabbers in that section were like vultures on their tracks, knowing if they received these lands that they would sell them as they did in Manitoba for a mere trifle. These whites were goading them on and making them believe they were unfairly and unjustly dealt with. Meetings were held by these people and secret organizations instituted, and as Mr. Clarke, Q.C., Council for one of the white men who followed Riel, said at his trial in addressing the jury "seeing that they had no leader in the Country, in an unfortunate hour had the tempter come to them in the shape of one of our men who had been primed for that purpose, by that man now cast for death, Louis Riel," they determined to send to Montana for him. A deputation was despatched and after little or no solicitation they returned with their man in July, 1884. Here is an extract from the answer he gave to the deputation, it does not show he wanted much pleading, on the contrary, he was endeavoring to make some excuse for his readiness to come into our country :

"To be frank is the shortest. I doubt whether my advice given to you on this soil concerning affairs on Canadian territory could cross the borders and retain any influence. But here is another view. The Canadian Government owe me two hundred and forty acres of land according to the thirty-first clause of the Manitoba treaty. They owe me also, five lots, valuable on account of hay, timber and river frontage. These lots were mine according to the different paragraphs of the same thirty-first clause of the above-mentioned Manitoba treaty. It is the Canadian Government which have deprived me, directly or indirectly, of those properties. Besides if they only pay attention to it a minute, they will easily find out that they owe me something else. Those my claims against them, are such as to hold good, notwithstanding the fact that I have become an American citizen. Considering then your interest and mine, I accept your very kind invitation."

Soon after Riel's arrival in the Country, he set himself up as a man acting under Divine guidance. Charles Nolin, a prominent half-breed and an intimate friend of his, and the Reverend Vital Fourmond in a suit, the Queen v.s. Arcand, et al., Riel's followers swore as follows :

"Charles Nolin, of the Parish of St. Laurent, district of Saskatchewan, in the North-West Territories, being duly sworn, doth depose and say :

"I knew Louis Riel, the leader and promoter of the rebellion. He is a man who exercised a most wonderful influence over the uneducated, credulous and ignorant half-breed population, so much so, that he did successfully lead them astray, against the remonstrances and advice of their priests, who have always been looked up to by them

as their true friends, protectors and guides, in all their concerns from the cradle to the grave.

"Riel resorted to the most unusual means to secure an overpowering influence over the minds of the half-breed people. For instance, to excite a feeling of awe in their minds, and no doubt with a view to making them believe that he was acting under Divine instructions, early in the beginning of winter he ordered all persons who had occasion to butcher or kill cattle, to save the blood for him, and from the first day of January he fed exclusively on blood instead of flesh meat, the blood being cooked in milk. This conduct made a deep impression on his superstitious dupes, and when combined with his continual praying and his daily revelation of the visions he had the preceding night, and the visit of saints and the repeated conversations he had with the Holy Ghost, the poor half-breeds were convinced in their souls that Riel was God's envoy and that it would be a mortal sin to refuse to obey and follow him as the chief appointed by God to lead them.

"I, Vital Fourmond, of St. Laurent, Director of Catholic Missions, being duly sworn, doth depose and say :

"That I am perfectly aware of the uprising of the half-breeds and of the causes which led thereto, and I am compelled to declare that the poor half-breeds were coerced and forced into that disastrous rising through the orders and insane instigation of Louis Riel.

"From what I personally witnessed and heard, from, before, during and after the establishment of Riel's so-called Provisional Government, whether at St. Laurent or at Batoche, the evidence of this my deposition is so certain and manifest that it does not admit of any doubt.

"Louis 'David' Riel, in his strange and alarming folly, fascinated our poor half-breeds as the snake is said to fascinate its victim, abusing, for his own ends, the great confidence that all the half-breeds reposed in him, a confidence founded upon his influence over their minds through his great and impassioned language, and above, all on the appearance of his profound religious feeling and devotion, which he displayed in the most glaring and hypocritical manner, which was rendered so convincing to their minds by his public proclamation of his mission as an inspired prophet, which he forced upon their imagination in the most insidious and diabolical manner; he proclaimed himself a new Moses, who had come to deliver his people from bondage and to place them in a new land of promise.

"To impress the people and keep them within his power, this man, Riel, resorted to all kinds of trickery. Often have I seen him praying aloud, prostrating himself in prayer and ordering all the others to do so. Thus he made a deep impression on his poor ignorant dupes and so convinced them of his divine mission that it was impossible to convince them that he was a trickster and would lead them to destruction. Riel so played on their ignorance that he made them believe in his power to work miracles; they firmly believed this."

Having thus set himself up as a being of supernatural power, his next step was to oppose and persecute the clergy, who were, of course, in his way, and opposed to his selfish designs. He took possession of their churches, holding his councils and meetings therein. At these gatherings he inflamed the minds of these people and made real grievances to appear where none existed. This continued for some time; at last they became restless, presenting grievances and making demands which could not be entertained; and the Government finding that the matter was assuming a serious aspect, appointed by an Order-in-Council, dated 26th January, 1885, a commission to go to the North-West, examine into the troubles, and redress grievances if any existed; but, before this commission could get there, Riel precipitated the rebellion, the first collision between himself and the troops taking place 26th March, 1885.

At all his meetings, and while inciting these people to rebel, he was in communication with, and had present many of the Indians with their chiefs, making them extravagant promises if they would join him to "fight the Government Police." In this he succeeded, for when the real fighting began, the Indians were in large numbers among his followers; besides those, he had at outposts such as Poundmaker, Big Bear, and others, acting under his instructions, destroying and taking the properties of the Hudson's Bay stores and white people, and murdering them without mercy, irrespective of age, condition or position.

This is an outline of the events immediately preceding the outbreak of the insurrection, and of the manner in which it was brought about by Riel. As to what occurred after this, in connection with the different battles, skirmishes and movements of the troops upon either side, it is not necessary for me to dwell. My purpose is to lay before you a true account of the causes that led to this uprising, with undeniable proof as to the correctness of my statements, showing that there is no ground for the charges made against the Government of unfair dealings with these Metis, that Riel's connection with it was not that of a Patriot nor a Hero, but that of selfishness and greed, and that the proper administration of the law rendered it necessary that he should suffer the penalty attached to his crime—for the preservation of peace and order, protection to life and property in that important section of our country.

You will remember that I have already said that Riel left the country in 1870: and had taken the oath of allegiance in the United States. It is therefore evident that he had no genuine claims as a Metis for lands in the North-West, without at all taking into account that he had forfeited every right to consideration from the Government, for the part he took as leader in the former rebellion. What, then, took him there? The answer is obvious, and will be plain to the reader as we proceed. He had men, as the French said, "primed" to mention his name as leader to these people, and matters "primed" so that he would come if a deputation were sent for him. I will deviate a little here, and show another instance of Riel's "priming" to carry out his purposes. At his trial, Charles Nolin testified as follows in regard to a meeting held in February, 1885:

Q. What took place at that meeting, did the prisoner (Riel) say anything about departing to the United States? A. Yes. Q. What did the prisoner tell you about that? A. He told me it would be well to try and make it appear as if they wanted to stop him going into the States; five or six persons were appointed to go among the people, and when Riel's going away was spoken about, the people were to say "No." Riel never had any intention of leaving the country. Q. Who instructed the people to do that? A. Riel suggested that himself. Q. Was that put into practice? A. Yes."

On return to the subject, we ask ourselves why he was so anxious to get back to the country. It was greed, as I have already said. Of this there is ample proof, and I need not about any comments, give the following extracts, which every Catholic of the West will believe, from the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith." These Annals are published in London, and the article I refer to is in the September number. They are published with reference to Catholic missions all over the world, under the special charge of the Pope, the Cardinals and Archbishops of the Church. The article is as follows in these words:

"We publish a touching letter on the civil war which ravaged Canada and caused the deaths of two missionaries, the Rev. Fathers Fafard and Marchand."

On page 333 the following occurs:

"About a year ago, some 30 agitators, under pretence that the Government violated their most sacred rights, frequently assembled secretly in the woods, and beneath the shadow of the gigantic firs, hatched their plots and bound themselves by oath not to divulge to any one the object they had in view. Of course we disapproved highly of these secret proceedings, and the consequence was a sudden irritation excited against the clergy, the populace accusing us of no longer favoring their interests as we used to do. The first acts of these assemblies was to send to the shores of the Missouri, across the Canadian border, in search of the too famous Riel, the great chief of the Metis movement in 1870, who since that event became an American citizen.

"I cannot help feeling a great fear or dread of that man's influence and a heavy shadow for the future that awaits us. These fears were only too well justified. During the months that followed, Riel continued to deceive the public and clergy by his persuasive words and apparent piety, and played the true wolf in sheep's clothing—the angel of darkness disguised as an angel of light. He chose the beautiful feast of St. Joseph, the patron given by Monseigneur to the half-caste nation, and under pretext of solemnizing the occasion, and also doing honor to the baptism of an English neophyte, he as-

assembled the most devoted of his friends, and put them under arms from the day before. On the evening of the same day, in order to bring the people together, and to have a pretext for making a general appeal to the nation, he spread a false report everywhere of the arrival of 500 police to massacre the fanatics, burn the houses and seize the lands. "We must march out to meet them," he said. "If we are united they will not be able to stand against us." A large number, unwilling to believe the news, as they had no other proof of it, refused to revolt, but were soon forced to take up arms, as they were threatened with being shot themselves and having their farms pillaged. They almost all yielded to force; only some of them standing firm and braving death. On St. Joseph's eve, amidst the darkness of night, a provisional government was proclaimed, and its first act was a sacrilegious one, the seizure of the Church of St. Antony at Batoche, in spite of the earnest protestations of the Rev. Father Moulin. On Sunday the 22nd March, a fervent and pious man, one of the authors of the movement, seeing the bad turn affairs had taken, refused to take part in the revolt. On St. Joseph's day, he had preferred to submit to be taken prisoner rather than to participate in all the crimes which inaugurated it, and which must forever brand this terrible revolution with disgrace.

"They were bent on revenge and their vengeance was frightful, terrible, truly diabolical. I will tell you some of its principle workings. On the 23rd March, Riel in his turn assembled his warmest partisans in the profaned Church of St. Antony, and there, in the midst of scenes rivaling each other in absurdity, folly and impiety, he publicly renounced the Holy Church of God, which was henceforth to be contemptuously called by him the *Old Woman of Rome*. Having proclaimed his intended mission as a prophet sent from God to reform religion, the reformer named himself *Exorcist*, and his confidant the *Exorcist*. Orders were given for the persecution of the faithful, and especially the clergy, and they tore us from our dwellings, us and our pious, faithful companions of Jesus; and placed us in a place of seige, and exposed us to the greatest dangers in the new presbytery of St. Antony at Batoche. We were indicted several times before the *Exorcist*, where, listening to the impieties and blasphemies of the *Exorcist*, Rev. Fathers Moulin, Vegreville and myself had to confess and defend our insulted faith. Liberty drawing upon ourselves a deluge of outrages and threats, and exposing us to the fire of the enemy if we remain obstinate in refusing to submit to the will of the tyrant. Meanwhile—"

And here is a point which I want you to note, as I will draw your attention to it again.

"Meanwhile, messages had been sent to the poor savages of the prairie, for the most part obstinate infidels, always discontent with the domination of the white man, and asking nothing better than to see the hour of deliverance, if not of vengeance, arrive. Barbarism has returned to the bloody ferocity of its worst days, and in some places, particularly at Frog Lake, the whites have been massacred, and with them the missionaries who tried to save them and prevent the revolt. The latter were the Rev. Fathers Fauré and Marchand. Their mission has been burned as well as all the dwellings of the whites."

The Rev. Father Fourmond gives other accounts of the cruel treatment to which these poor creatures were subjected, and concludes his letter as follows:

"What evils have the folly and hypocrisy of one man heaped upon our poor little population. About twenty killed, as many wounded, fires, sackings; a dark and gloomy picture we have now before our eyes. All is not over yet, either, for about thirty of our unfortunate Christians are prisoners of war and await their trial at Regina, the capital of the North-West Territory. Riel, the *Exorcist*, is among the number, and is the one, it is generally believed, who will suffer death in expiation of the crimes he has committed and the blood he has caused to be shed."

FOURMOND, O.M.I.,

"Missioner Apostolic."

This authority ought to be undoubted, and conclusively shows what a character this man was. But I will go further. The Venerable Bishop of Saint Albert, Mgr. Grandin, said: "That the conduct of Riel while he directed the insurrection was odious and monstrous. That he had systematically persecuted the Church."

More than this, the priests whose names are appended to the following letter speak in no uncertain sound as to his motive. It reads thus:

PRINCE ALBERT, June 12th, 1885.

"We, the priests of the district most particularly affected by the rebellion, to

wild St. Laurent, St. Andrew, Grandin, Duck Lake and Batoche; for it was there, in the midst of our people, that Louis 'David' Riel had established his headquarters, desire to draw the attention of your fellow-countrymen in Canada to these facts.

"Louis 'David' Riel does not merit the sympathy of the Roman Catholic Church, the members of that church, having usurped our mission as priests and denied our people the benefits and consolation it was our duty to render them. He has shown this in his purely personal interest. Signed: Pere Andre, Pere Thomas, Pere Fourmond, Pere Vegreville, Pere Letacy, Pere Fourmond, Cure of Batoche."

But in addition to this; I will give *Globe* evidence as to his conduct. The *Globe* article published early in 1885, in referring to the grievances of which we hear so much, under the heading "Redressing Grievances by Constitutional Means,"

"A number of Metis formed a union and continued for months to act in concert with Riel, whose agitation they regarded as quite loyal and constitutional. After a while they began to urge that the Indian title to the North-West had never been extinguished. That it was not with the Hudson Bay Company but with the Indians, the ~~settlers~~, and pioneer white settlers to whom the country really belonged; that the Government had to deal. It is believed also that he was bent in claiming from the Government indemnity for personal losses which he had sustained by the confiscation of his ~~own~~ ones belonging to him in Winnipeg, and which had increased enormously since the time of his banishment. It is almost certain he began to put forth demands as the white settlers could have no sympathy with and the Government could not for a moment entertain; and, unknown to the English-speaking people, a ~~secret~~ agitation was formed to enforce these demands by illegal and violent means. Riel began to use stronger language, in hopes that he might be arrested on ~~unlawful~~ grounds, and then excite public sympathy in behalf of himself and the cause of which he was the leader."

The *Globe* further said on the 20th March, 1885: "Louis Riel, the hero of the Red River Rebellion, recently exiled from Manitoba, has created dissension among the half-breeds. An attack is imminent."

Further on we find the *Globe* say in August, 1885:

"At the moment Riel's letter to Major Crozier was put in evidence, it became clear that the prisoner had not only been participator in, but the instigator and leading mind of the rebellion. No shadow of doubt remained that he was guilty as charged in the indictment. The testimony that followed only deepened the certainty of his guilt."

Further proof can be given of a character that cannot be for a moment doubted. It is to be gathered from the evidence given at Riel's trial by the Rev. Father Andre, and the Priest who attended spiritually to Riel during his confinement and on the ~~stand~~.

Father Andre was a witness called on his behalf. His evidence on cross examination by Mr. Casgrain was as follows:

Q. I believe in the month of December, 1884, you had an interview with Riel and Nolin, with regard to a certain sum of money which the prisoner claimed from the Government? A. Not with Nolin. Nolin was not present at the interview.

Q. Was the prisoner was there? A. Yes.

Q. Will you please state what the prisoner asked of the Federal Government? A. He had two interviews with the prisoner on that subject.

Q. The prisoner claimed a certain indemnity from the Federal Government, was it not? A. When the prisoner made his claim I was there with another gentleman, and we were asked from the Government \$100,000. We thought this was exorbitant, and the prisoner said, 'Wait a little; I will take at once \$35,000 cash.'

Q. And on that condition the prisoner was to leave the country if the Government paid him the \$35,000? A. Yes, that was the condition he put.

Q. When was this? A. This was on the 23rd December, 1884.

Q. There was also another interview between you and the prisoner? A. There was about twenty interviews between us.

Q. Was he always after you to ask you to use your influence with the Federal Government to obtain this indemnity? A. The first time he spoke of it was on the

12th December. He had never spoken a word about it before, and on the 23rd of December he spoke about it again,

Q. He talked about it very frequently? A. On these two occasions only.

Q. That was his great occupation? A. Yes, at those times.

Q. Is it not true that the prisoner told you he himself was the half-breed question? A. He did not say so in express terms, but he conveyed that idea. He said: 'If I am satisfied, the half-breeds will be.' I must explain this. This objection was made to him, that even if the Government granted him \$35,000 the half-breed question would remain the same, and he said, in answer to that: 'If I am satisfied the half-breeds will be.'

Q. Is it not a fact he told you he would even accept a less sum than the \$35,000? A. Yes. He said: 'Use all the influence you can: you may not get all that, but get all you can, and if you get less we will see.'

The above is corroborated, if even such were necessary, by Charles Nolin, a witness also at Riel's trial. This was his testimony:

"In the beginning of December, 1884, he began to show a desire to have money he spoke to me about it first, I think."

Q. How much did he say he wanted? The first time he spoke of money I think he said he wanted \$10,000 or \$15,000.

Q. From whom would he get the money? A. The first time he spoke about it he did not know any particular plan to get it; at the same time, he told me that he wanted to claim an indemnity from the Canadian Government. He said that the Canadian Government owed him about \$100,000, and then the question arose who the persons were whom he would have to talk to the Government about the indemnity. Some time after that the prisoner told me that he had an interview with Father André, who told him he would use his influence with the Government to obtain for him \$35,000.

Q. What did he tell you? A. He said if he got the money he wanted from the Government, he said he would go wherever the Government wished to send him. He had told that to Father André."

The venerable priest of St. Patrick's Montreal, Father Dowd, at the conclusion of his sermon on Sunday the 22nd Nov. 1885, gave his congregation some excellent advice regarding the present agitation of the French Canadians. The advice he was about to give them, he said, was tendered only after great and matured deliberation. It was unnecessary for him to tell them that he was no politician, and consequently was not moved by political influence. He had enjoyed, he said, the privilege of a personal interview with Mgr. Grandin, Bishop of the North-West Territories, the scene of the late rebellion. From his Lordship's own lips he had heard the recital of all the atrocities that had been committed by the pagan Indians and the easily deceived half-breeds, urged on by a bad and unscrupulous man; how four missionaries had been massacred almost under his Lordship's eyes; how the half-breeds had been led not only to revolt against the Government, but under their wicked leader had been induced to abandon their faith and turn their backs on the devoted clergy to follow a leader who wished to set aside the Pope and the Church and all authority, ecclesiastical and civil.

Much more could be given but the above establishes as clearly as it possibly can be shewn that Riel's sole object in his "priming" to be invited to the country as leader of the Metis and his subsequent conduct in inciting them to take up arms against the Government was a selfish one, he cared not to better the condition of the Metis, Oh! no. He was the Metis, and it is clear he did not wish to await the arrival of the Governmental Commission to investigate the matter, for no one knew better than he that none existed, either with himself or with the Metis of that district, and a constitutional peaceful means of settlement of grievances was not what he wanted, it was money and truthfully he said "If I am satisfied the half-breeds will be."

In order that I may present to you in a plain manner, and in a way that no one can fail to see it, I will reduce all the charges made against the Government by Mr. Blake, Mr. Laurier and their friends in connection with the "Riel cry" under the follow-

ing lands, and I flatter myself that each charge will be successfully answered as I take it up:

The first one is that of the grievances of the half-breeds in regard to the manner in which they had been treated by the Government, implying a justification for the same.

The second, that the court that tried Riel had no jurisdiction to do so, and that he had an unfair trial.

The third, that no political offender had suffered death under the British Crown for more than fifty years.

And fourthly, that Riel was insane and not accountable for his acts.

Now as regards the first, it will be necessary to explain what the half-breeds wanted, in order that we may see how the Government acted towards them. They wanted in the first place River Surveys, that is, the river as a front to their lots, ten chains in width and running back two miles: they wanted also, exemption from timber dues, that is, a small tax which was imposed for cutting wood on Government lands when a Metis had no wood on his own lot; and lastly they wanted scrips or patents for their lands. I may here mention that some delay was created in the granting of these scrips or patents as it had been discovered, as I have already told you, that a large percentage of the half-breeds there were already settled with and had received their lands in Manitoba, and that as a matter of precaution every claimant for his patent had to prove his right to it under the N. W. Land Regulations before he could receive it. We have in our Blue books two petitions only from the section in which this trouble took place. They are of dates 4th September, 1882, and 19th November, 1883, and I will give the names of those in order that you may see what a large percentage of those who signed them were not entitled to recognition as they had obtained their rights in Manitoba

Gabriel Dumont,
Jean Carron,
Baptiste Rochlot,
Euse Parenteau,
Pierre Honoré,
Baptiste Delorme,
William Fidler,
Baptiste Boyer,
Euse Carrière,
Napoléon Neault,
André Neault,
Napoléon Carrière,
Patrice Touron,
Calixte Touron,
Antoine Nandal,
Gervais,

Charles Larivière,
François Touron,
Joseph Parenteau,
Xavier Batoche,
Joseph Vandal,
François Fidler,
Alexis Gervais,
Joseph Delorme,
Baptiste Vandal,
Antoine Ferguson,
Baptiste Vandal,
Joseph Tourton,
William Vandal,
Jean Carron,
Théophile Carron,
R. P. Tessier,

Mathias Parenteau,
Moise Honoré,
Zéphirin Dumas,
Elzéar Parisien,
William Natome,
A. Fidler,
Isidore Villeneuve,
Adolphe Nolin,
Ignace Poitras,
Théophile Goulette,
Jérôme Racette,
Charles Gareau,
Maxime Poitras,
Emanuel Champagne,
Louis Batoche.—47.

List of Persons whose names appear on Petition who received Land or Scrip in Manitoba:—

Jean Carron,
Baptiste Rochlot,
Euse Parenteau,
Pierre Honoré,
Baptiste Delorme,
William Fidler,
Baptiste Boyer,
Euse Carrière,
Napoléon Carrière,
Patrice Touron,
Calixte Touron,
Antoine Vandal,
Baptiste Vandal,

Joseph Touron,
Antoine Ferguson,
Baptiste Vandal,
Joseph Touron,
William Vandal,
Jean Carron,
Théophile Carron,
Mathias Parenteau,
Elzéar Parisien,
A. Fidler,
Isidore Villeneuve,
Charles Larivière,

François Touron,
Joseph Parenteau,
Joseph Vandal,
François Fidler,
Alexis Gervais,
Joseph Delorme,
Adolphe Nolin,
Ignace Poitras,
Jérôme Racette,
Maxime Poitras,
Emanuel Champagne,
Louis Batoche.—47.

List of Persons whose names appear on Petition who have not proved their claim:—

Gabriel Dumont,	Moisè Honoré,	Xavier Batoche,
Napoléon Neault,	Zéphirin Dumas,	Théophile Goulette,
André Neault,	William Natome,	Charles Gargan,—10
R. P. Tessier,		

It will thus be seen that of the 47 subscribers to the first, 37 had received lands in Manitoba, while of the remaining 10, eight were unable to prove their claims.

In the second petition there were 32 subscribers, their names being

William Bremner, jun.,	L. L. Letendre,	Henry Smith,
Maxime Lapine,	Wm. Letendre,	Chs. Nolin,
Octave Regnier,	Wm. Swain,	Alade Légaré,
Bte. Boucher,	Elzéar Swain,	Norbout Tourcotte,
William Bremner,	Willie Bruce,	Solomon Tourcotte,
John Ouellette,	Ant. Richard,	Modeste Laviolette,
Chs. Lavalée,	Isidore Boyer,	Moisè Bremner,
Isidore Dumas,	Solomon Boucher,	Joseph Bremner,
James Short,	J. B. Boucher, jun.,	Jonas Laviolette,
Ambroise Dumont,	L. Schmidt,	Alex. Bremner.—32
Eugène Boucher,	Jos. Dumas,	

Of the above the following received Land or Scrip in Manitoba:—

William Bremner, jun.,	Chs. Nolin,	Solomon Boucher,
Bte. Boucher,	Norbout Tourcotte,	J. B. Boucher, jun.,
William Bremner,	William Letendre,	Louis Schmidt,
Chs. Lavalée,	Wm. Swain,	Jos. Dumas,
Isidore Dumas,	Elzéar Swain,	Modeste Laviolette,
James Short,	Willie Bruce,	Moisè Bremner,
Ambroise Dumont,	Ant. Richard,	Joseph Bremner,
Henry Smith,	Isidore Boyer,	Alex. Bremner.—24

Of the 24 names given above there were unable to prove their claims

Maxime Lapine,	L. S. Letendre,	Solomon Tourcotte,
John Ouellette,	Octave Regnier,	Jonas Laviolette.—8
Alade Légaré,	Eugène Boucher,	

This shows a large percentage of half-breeds who were not entitled to lands; but we have evidence to show, that the percentage was even greater at the time of the outbreak than these petitions show. I will give the report of Mr. Pearce, Superintendent of Indian affairs in that section, appointed by the Mackenzie Government while in power and we have a right to presume he was therefore a good Reformer. He was sent to the settlement where the disturbance took place, to investigate and enquire into the troubles and report the result of his enquiry to the Government. He made a lengthy and very minute report, searching into the claims of each and every case. It was published and presented to the House of Commons on the 15th of April, 1885. See *Sessional Papers* 7 to 8 vol. xix, No. 6, 1886. Mr. Pearce sums up his investigation as follows:

"1st. This report shows that of all the 254 settlers at the time of the outbreak, not one was unable to obtain patent for his land through the action, or rather non-action of the Government, and even in March, 1884, there were only ten cases of delay, which delay was caused by the conflicting surveys of One Arrow's reserve and the St. Laurent parish.

"2nd. That not one man of the 256, or anyone else who ever resided in the district, ever lost one inch of land through the system of survey, when such survey was made subsequent to his settlement thereon.

"3rd. That 92 per cent. of the 253 had no rights as North-West half-breeds. Of that 92 per cent. those who were half-breeds had participated in all the rights accorded those people in the Province of Manitoba.

"4th. That not one settler in the district had an acre of land sold over his head to which he had any claim, or had even preferred one.

"5th. That the timber dues were not onerous, amounting only to twenty-five cents per settler per annum.

"6th. That the hay permit question never affected them in the remotest degree.

by which is respectfully submitted.

to be held.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. PEARCE, Superintendent.

I will follow this proof by what Father Andre swore at Riol's trial.

Will you state if since the arrival of the prisoner in the country up to the rebellion, the Government has made any favorable answer to the demands of the rebels? A. Yes, I know that they have acceded to certain demands in regard to those who did not have any scrip in Manitoba. A telegram was sent on the 1st of June, granting the scrip.

Before that time? A. Yes, regarding the alteration of the survey of lots of land, there was an answer from the Government saying they would grant it, and that was an important question.

What question then remained to be settled? A. The question of patents, which was settled also in a certain way, because Mr. Duck was sent and I went with him as interpreter.

What other question remained? A. Only the question of wood, timber.

ought to be conclusive, but I will give farther, what Father McWilliam, a priest who lives in the diocese of Kingston, who went up to that country during the summer of 1885, and who, as an observing, shrewd gentleman, obtained information which led him to state, when interviewed after his return, on the 20th November, 1885, in answer to the following:

What do you consider caused the rebellion? A. Well, I believe that the poor people were goaded on by capitalists who had gone into the North-West and received large tracts of land around Batoche and Prince Albert, which I am told is the garden of Canada. You are probably aware that the immigrants to the North-West are totally ignorant of the country and live in mental terror of the noble red man, and the half-breed, and do not know how to deal with an Indian. Well, then, the capitalists seeing their fortune as nearly made, as fast as they desired, incited the poor people who had looked a little upon the rebellion, in hopes that they could drive the Indians and half-breeds out of their homes, and then secure for themselves the land.

I will follow this by Mr. Girouard, M.P. for Jacques Cartier, who said, in addressing his constituents on the 15th August, 1885:

It is evident that the Government is not responsible for the misfortunes of the North-West. What, then, was the cause of them? 1. The spirit of revenge on the part of Riol. 2. His blind and inordinate ambition. He believed himself to be the King of the North-West, with power to dispose of the whole world, and speaking as a prophet out of God himself. 3. The agitation of speculators and agents of American companies, whose interest it was to promote trouble. 4. The cries raised by certain hungry and disappointed politicians; and lastly, the inflammatory tone of certain newspapers and journals that guide a portion of public opinion, such as the Globe.

and the state from the Rev. Father Fourmond, another undoubted and high authority, who said when asked as to the author of the North-West insurrection, "the author of the North-West troubles is Louis Riol, and, as he is the author of them, it is he alone who deserves to be punished. If like me, you had followed Riol's steps and studied the hypocrisy, the cunning and secret arts that Riol has used to seduce and seduce these people and drag them into rebellion, whether they would or not, you would, as I do, cast upon that cruel and tyrannical man, all the blame of the trouble. Riol made use of their religion; he made use of their ignorance of their own rights, touching every sensitive cord to make them the dupes of his ambition. He is a man who says that Riol is mad, but the more his conduct is examined, the more we must be the conviction that that notorious man, under the appearance of piety, preserves the plentitude of his reason. All his plans have a sequence and a clearness which show a fixed purpose to attain his end, and at the same time to make the rebellion if his criminal undertaking should fail. Riol must bear all the blame of this rebellion. He alone is to blame for all the troubles that have resulted from it, and all the suffering."

Now, who is the author of the North-West troubles? It is Louis Riol, and, as he is the author of them, it is he alone who deserves to be punished. If like me, you had followed Riol's steps and studied the hypocrisy, the cunning and secret arts that Riol has used to seduce and seduce these people and drag them into rebellion, whether they would or not, you would, as I do, cast upon that cruel and tyrannical man, all the blame of the trouble. Riol made use of their religion; he made use of their ignorance of their own rights, touching every sensitive cord to make them the dupes of his ambition. He is a man who says that Riol is mad, but the more his conduct is examined, the more we must be the conviction that that notorious man, under the appearance of piety, preserves the plentitude of his reason. All his plans have a sequence and a clearness which show a fixed purpose to attain his end, and at the same time to make the rebellion if his criminal undertaking should fail. Riol must bear all the blame of this rebellion. He alone is to blame for all the troubles that have resulted from it, and all the suffering."

Believe me, Sir, I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

I will give two or three more extracts from speeches of prominent gentlemen in the North-West.

the Reform ranks, two of whom voted against Mr. Blake on the Riel question: and you will observe, that although they supposed there was a fault somewhere, which we of course deny, but admitting there was, they do not justify the rebellion.

The Hon. Alexander McKenzie, said in the House in 1885, and I think during the time the rebellion was going on, that "He did not allege that as a justification for succeeding events, because he considered that no mere act or fault of the Government of the day, could have justified the insurrection and its consequences."

Sir Richard Cartwright said, in a speech delivered by him in Orillia, on Dec. 17th, 1885: "But to say rebellion is justified, is a very different thing. A rebellion may be excused, and parties who goad unfortunate, ignorant men into rebellion, ought to be punished. But that is a wholly different thing from justifying a rebellion; and least of all, can I undertake to justify rebellion in an Indian country, where, as I have said, an enormous number of our countrymen and countrywomen would have been exposed to all the horrors of a savage war, if that rebellion had spread."

Mr. Gigault, M.P. for Rouville, in Quebec, and this is an important witness, said: "I say that I do not approve of this rebellion because I think that the serious grievances of which the half-breed had to complain, were not such as to justify a rebellion."

Mr. Fitzpatrick, Riel's counsel, said to a reporter of the *New York Herald*, who interviewed him in England in connection with this case: "There was no justification for the rebellion."

I could go on multiplying proofs, but I have given enough to satisfy any man open to conviction that there were no real grievances. That the Government had done all that could be expected, they had granted them the surveys as they wanted it done; they had given Scrips to those entitled to receive them, as you have seen by the Rev. Father Andre's testimony. A telegram was sent on the 4th March, from the Government, granting the Scrip; this was twenty-two days before the first shot was fired as I have already said, which was at Duck Lake on the 28th March. Now I ask what can be more clearly proved than that, there was nothing left for these men to complain of, and that the whole trouble was brought about by the selfish designs of Louis Riel. This is my answer to the first charge.

I will proceed now to take up charge No. 2, as to the jurisdiction of the court and fairness of the trial:

The court was established under the Mackenzie Government, and I suppose Mr. Blake, who was at least a part of the time Minister of Justice in that Government, ought to know something of the Bill, it therefore does not become the friends of these gentlemen to cry down a court of their own making. I will give the words of Sir Alexander Campbell, who was Minister of Justice at the time of Riel's trial, as they are much abler and so much better authority than anything I can offer. I will ask a careful perusal of them. They are given in a memo. the Queen v. Riel, and reads as follows:

"It should be sufficient to say that the legality of the tribunal by which he was tried had been affirmed by the Privy Council, the highest court in the Empire, and has seemed to them so clear that the eminent counsel who represented the prisoner could not advance arguments against it which were thought even to require an answer.

"It has been said that a jury composed of six only, and the absence of a grand jury, are features so inconsistent with the rights of British subjects that the prisoner had still ground for complaint; but, as was pointed out in the Privy Council, the same crime may be tried elsewhere in the British Empire, notably in India, without any jury, either grand or petty, and this mode of trial has been sanctioned by the Imperial Parliament.

"It is to be observed also, that the offence was tried in the country in which it was committed, under the law as it then existed and had existed for years, and that this is a course of which no offender can fairly complain, while it is a right to which every criminal is entitled.

"Of the competency of the court, which has been affirmed by the full court in Manitoba, the Government saw no reason to entertain doubt; but having regard to

exceptional character of the case, the usual course was departed from in the prisoner's favor, and a respite was granted, to enable him to apply to the ultimate appeal in England, and thus to take advantage to the very utmost of every right the law could afford him.

"The fairness of the trial has not been disputed by the prisoner's counsel, nor arranged either before the Court of Appeal in Manitoba or the Privy Council. It is, on the contrary, been admitted, not tacitly alone by this omission but expressly in public. It may be well, however, to state shortly the facts, which show how fully which the Government fully acknowledged both to the public and the prisoner has been fulfilled.

"It was most desirable not only to ensure the impartial conduct of the trial, which had been done by the appointment of any barrister of known standing, but to show the public that this had been effected; and in view of this the prosecution was conducted by two leading counsels in Ontario, known to be in sympathy with different political parties. With them was associated a French advocate of standing and of influence in Quebec, and the personal presence and assistance of the Deputy Minister of Justice was given to them throughout the proceedings.

"The procedure adopted and the course taken at the trial, will show that every opportunity for the fullest defence was afforded; and it is needless to add, what is well known and recognized, that the prisoner was represented by counsel whose zeal and ability have made it impossible to suggest that his defence could in any hands have been more carefully or ably conducted."

Again Sir Alexander says as to the fairness of the trial:

"On the 21st July, the prisoner's counsel read affidavits to the effect that certain witnesses not then present were necessary for the defence, and that medical experts on the question of insanity were required by them from the Province of Ontario and from Toronto. They represented that the prisoner had not had means to procure the attendance of these witnesses, and desired an adjournment for a month, which they would be able to obtain it.

"In answer to this application, of which the Crown had no notice until the day before, the Crown's counsel pointed out that these medical witnesses, as well as others in the North-West Territories who were wanted, could all be got within a week; and they offered not only to consent to an adjournment for that time, but to assist with the prisoner's counsel in procuring their attendance, and to pay their expenses.

"The counsel for the prisoner accepted this offer, which the presiding judge said was a reasonable one, and the trial was adjourned until the 22nd. In the meantime the witnesses were procured. They were present and were examined for the prisoner, and their expenses were paid by the Crown, the medical gentlemen being remunerated as experts at the same rate as those called for the prosecution.

"A good deal," he remarked, "has been said about the jury being composed of only six. There is no general law which says that a jury shall invariably consist of twelve, or of any particular number. In Manitoba, in civil cases, the jury is composed of twelve, but nine can find a verdict. In the North-West Territories Act, it is itself declared that the jury shall consist of six, and this was the number of the jury in this instance. Would the stipendiary magistrate have been justified in empanelling twelve, when the Statute directs him to empanel six only?"

To this the reader can only apply one meaning, viz., that fairness and justice had been done, but we proceed:

I will add to this the evidence of Reform papers, what Riel's counsel said of the trial, and what Riel himself said:

The *Hamilton Times* of 3rd August, 1885, said: The jury at Regina has found Riel guilty of treason. The trial we believe was a fair one, there was abundant evidence that Riel headed an insurrection against the Government, which was only ended with loss of life and destruction of property. The jury could not on the face of the evidence find him innocent of the crime charged to him.

The *London Advertiser* said on September 19th, 1885: No one can maintain that Riel was not properly convicted upon the evidence submitted.

The *Winnipeg Free Press* said: Riel was fairly tried, deservedly condemned, and justly executed. There is no cause to regret his fate; no patriotic Canadian should regret it; it would have been a gross insult to the laws of our country to have permitted him to escape condign punishment.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, one of the lawyers who defended Riel, said in a speech on Beau Square, in Montreal, "It was unfair to arraign before the tribunal of opinion the judge and jury who tried Riel, they were simply the instance of the end and it was found in the Statute Book. The law was passed by our own representatives and we were responsible for the iniquitous portions of it."

Riel himself said in his speech to the court at his trial: "Bless also the law for the Crown, because they have done I am sure what they thought their duty. I have shown me favors which at first I did not expect from them."

Mr. Christopher Robinson, Q.C. said at Regina at the trial of Riel:

"All those witnesses who are in this country can be got in a week just as well in a month or a year. The Crown will do more. The Crown will join with my learned friend in telegraphing to those three gentlemen who are at Quebec, and those gentlemen who are at Prince Albert. I desire that to come from the Crown as well from them, and the Crown will pay their expenses."

Mr. Fitzpatrick to the Justice:

"I read the Order in Council as conferring very limited powers. However, the difficulty is all obviated by the offer made by the Crown."

We also read that after the trial:

"The counsel for the defence, Messrs. Fitzpatrick, Lemieux and Greenham waited on Judge Richardson before they went East, and thanked him for the fairness and consideration which had characterized his rulings."

It was stated by the French speaker at the Reform Convention, held in Windsor, last month, that the jury was composed of six Protestants, of this there is no evidence from any authentic source that I have been able to lay my hands on. Should it matter what the religion of these men were, any more than it would in any courts in Ontario. What ought to be looked at, and what I have no doubt was fully watched, was that good competent men would be selected. That all these men were, we must believe, as not a word has been said against one of them. But the suggestion that they were Protestants is for a base purpose, because they dare not so the verdict of the jury was not according to the evidence. This, therefore, makes any attempt to use a religious cry all the more dishonest and unworthy maintenance of any single intelligent elector in this country.

By reference to the report of the trial as published in the parliamentary report, I find that thirty-six men were summoned to the court to attend as jurymen. Of this number twelve had been drawn by ballot, five objected to by the counsel for the prisoner, and one by the counsel for the Crown, before the necessary number was obtained. Nothing could have been fairer, and I defy any man to show that they could have as honest men done anything else than from the evidence bring Riel in guilty.

More evidence as to the jurisdiction of the court and fairness of the trial is given from extracts of the reports of the three judges of the Superior Court of Manitoba before whom the case was tried in appeal; but, as I prefer giving them when dealing with the question of insanity, I will defer them for the present, feeling that what I say, with what I have already given, and the fact that Her Majesty's Privy Council in England established the jurisdiction of the court and fairness of the trial, have sufficiently met charge No. 2.

Having disposed of charge No. 2, it will be in order to take up the third, in which it is pleaded that no political offender has received capital punishment for the last years or so. To this, I answer that the case of Louis Riel is different from any in my knowledge of British history for that period. In the first place, he cannot be treated as a man who was prompted by honest and patriotic motives, therefore, not a political offender. On the contrary, it was shown, and I think it is shown you, that his aim was to extract money out of the Government, and that

was no justification for his leading the half-breeds to rebellion. Sir Alexander Campbell, in his able paper says:

"It has been urged that the prisoner's crime was a political one, inspired by political motives alone; that a rebellion prompted only for the redress of alleged political grievances, differs widely from an ordinary crime, and that however erroneous may be the judgment of its leader, in endeavoring to redress the supposed wrongs of others, he is entitled, at least, to be regarded as unselfish, and as in his own view, patriotic."

"This ground has been most earnestly considered, but the Government has been unable to recognize in the prisoner a political offender only, or to see that upon the evidence there can be any doubt that his motives were mainly selfish. On the contrary, it seems plain that he was willing at any moment, for the sake of gain, to desert his daunted followers, and to abandon his efforts for the redress of their alleged grievances, if, under cover of them, he could have obtained satisfaction for his own personal money demands."

Besides this, this was Riel's second offence of the same kind, having headed a former rebellion in 1869-'70, in which he had done much injury to life and property; and caused the brutal, cold-blooded and unnecessary murder of Thomas Scott, for whom the Hon. Mr. Blake had great sympathy, and asked that a reward of \$5,000 be granted to apprehend Riel, when he moved in the Ontario Legislature where he had a seat, on the 3rd of February, 1871:

"That the cold-blooded murder (for his outspoken loyalty to the Queen) of Thomas Scott, lately a resident of this Province, and an emigrant thence to the North-West, has impressed this House with a feeling of sorrow and indignation, and in the opinion of this House, every effort should be made to bring to trial the perpetrators of this great crime, who as yet go unwilts of justice."

His motives may have been then honest, but they have very much changed when we recall his speech and vote in the Commons on the Riel question, we also find his lieutenants, for whom he and the party are responsible, sympathizing with and congratulating his *Rouge* Nationalist friends in Quebec, upon victories won at the polls on this "Riel cry."

After the election in Chambly, Mr. Prefontaine, the Rielite candidate, received the following telegram, congratulating him upon his success:

"Toronto, 30th July, 1888.

"*Liberals of Toronto congratulate you on your splendid victory. Welcome to our colleague.*"

"J. D. EDGAR."

This Mr. Prefontaine, moreover, is no less a personage than the President of the Dominion Young Men's Liberal Association.

But, then again, what did the leader of the Liberal Party in Ontario do when the intelligence was received of the defeat of the Ross Government? He sent the following significant dispatch to Hon. Mr. Mercer in Montreal.

"To the Hon. H. Mercer, M.P.P., 25 Bevi Street:

"*PANORAMA, Ont., October 16.*—Have just received here the joyful news of your great triumph. I congratulate you and all our friends on your important victory; may your Premiership be a long one and full of advantage to your province and the Dominion, and of honor to yourself.

"O. MOWAT, Prime Minister of Ontario."

Moreover, Riel incited and aroused the wild Indians, a crime the most heinous in the eyes of every civilized country, to a "war of extermination," as he himself called it; massacring and butchering our fellow-countrymen without mercy. I will recall to your memories that dreadful tragedy at Frog Lake, and give the following summary account of that sad event, as furnished by Father Legoff, a missionary in the North-West since 1880, who at the time of the outbreak was stationed in the vicinity of that place, he said:

"The tragedy occurred on the morning of Good Friday—the day before the attack under Miserable Man and Wandering Spirit had received word of engagements at Frog Lake, where the police under Major Crozier, with Prince Albert Volunteers were forced to retreat after losing ten or twelve men. They spent the night before the attack celebrating that victory. They had been told by Riel's messengers that the Americans were about to invade the North-West, that the Canadians were to be driven from the land parcelled among the Metis and the Indians. Accordingly, they gathered themselves during the night, and before daylight one hundred and fifty warriors, painted, entered the little hamlet at Frog Lake, plundered the stores and made prisoners of the inhabitants. Father Farfard, who, with his colleague, Father Marchand, was about to hold the usual Good Friday service in the Mission Church, was attacked in the morning, by one of the savages, who struck him a heavy blow in the face with a whip, which blackened his eye. The priests proceeded to the church, however, and began the service. The Crees crowded in with their guns in their hands, and evidently made up their minds to massacre the whites. They became extremely noisy, and Father Farfard stood up and begged them at any rate to respect the Church. But his appeal only rendered them more insolent. He again besought them to let the service proceed, but they kept up a terrific din throughout. After the service, the whites, including the priest, went to Delaney's house for breakfast, but the Indians soon surrounded them to set out for their camp, which was about a mile off, on the lake shore. The two priests led the way, breviary in hand, well knowing that they were marching to death. Quinn, the Indian agent, who was in the rear, refused to follow, and was shot dead. Thereupon Wandering Spirit gave the word to slaughter all hands. Father Quinn, Charles Gouin, the carpenter, was shot and wounded at Johnny Pritchard's door, and finished by Miserable Man. The two priests had hastened back on hearing the shooting, and as they neared the Indians they fell on their knees desiring to die in that position. But just then Delaney was shot down under the eyes of his wife, and Father Farfard rose and ran over to him to hear his confession and prepare him for death according to the Catholic rite. A shower of bullets, however, put an end to Delaney's sufferings, and the priest who was kneeling over him, fell mortally wounded by his side. An Indian whom he had always befriended rushed up and finished him. Father Marchand, who was about one hundred paces away, then ran through a storm of bullets waving his hand to Mrs. Delaney and Mrs. Gowanlock, in order to ward them off. A bullet entered his head and he fell backwards, dead, his breviary falling out of his hand beside him. Almost at the same instant, the man, Willis Craft, a lay brother, was shot on the top of a hillock a few yards away, and then Gilchrist, Gowanlock's hired man, and Dill, the trader, were butchered. Gowanlock had been slaughtered about the time Delaney and Father Farfard were disposed of. Father Legoff some time afterwards recovered the priests' breviaries and also their crosses. The crosses and breviaries were stained in blood. The bodies of the victims were stripped. The Indians then fired the little library attached to the priests' house, first tearing many of their books to pieces. They then entered the church, broke open the altar, and taking out the Host scattered it on the altar platform. Having gutted the church they fired it also and held a dance about the burning pile. All the other buildings in the settlement, with the exception of the Hudson Bay store, were also set on fire, and leaving the bodies of their victims unburied, the Indians carried off the two white women and Mr. Cameron, of the Hudson Bay store, and had a great feast."

Here is a letter of Riel's produced at the trial, which speaks for itself.

"To MAJOR CROZIER, Commandant of the Police Force at Carlton and Battleford:

"Major,—The Councillors of the Provisional Government of the Saskatchewan, have the honor to communicate to you the following conditions of surrender. You will be required to give up completely the situation which the Canadian Government have placed you in, at Carlton and Battleford, together with all Government property."

"In case of non-acceptance, we intend to attack you, when to-morrow, the 15th of May, is over; and to commence without delay a war of extermination upon all those who have shown themselves hostile to our rights."

"Messrs. Charles and Maxime Lepine, are the gentlemen with whom you will have to treat."

"LOUIS 'DAVID' RIEL, Governor."	
René Parenteau, Chairman	Donald Ross, Secretary
Chas. Nolin,	Amb. Jobin,
Gabe Dumont,	John Baptiste Parenteau,
Melise Ouellette,	Bernie Henry,
Albert Monkman,	Albert Desorme,
Bte. Boyer,	Dum. Carriere,
	Maxime Lepine,
	Bte. Boucher,
	David Tetreault,
	Ph. Garnot, Secretary.

Sr. ANTHONY, 21st March, 1885.

To this I may be permitted to add the words of Sir. Alexander Campbell while ~~trusting~~ ^{trusting} with this part of Riel's conduct:

"But if an unselfish desire could be credited to the prisoner to redress political wrongs even by armed rebellion, it would at least have been necessary to disprove the charge which lies against him, that in his own mind the claims of humanity had no place, but that he was prepared to carry out his designs by bringing upon an unsuspecting people all the horrors of an Indian rising with the outrages and atrocities which, as he knew full well, must inevitably accompany it. That this cannot be ~~disproved~~ ^{disproved}; but that it is beyond all dispute true, the evidence makes plain.

"From the beginning, even before Duck Lake, he was found in company with Indians armed, and to the end he availed himself of their assistance.

"In that engagement, the first occasion of bloodshed, according to the evidence of the witnesses, Astley, Ross, and William Tomkins, the Indians composed a large portion of his force—one third of thereabouts.

"In a letter found in the camp of Poundmaker, an Indian Chief, in the prisoner's handwriting, and signed by him, after describing in most exaggerated language what is termed their victory at Duck Lake, it said: "Praise God for the success He has given us. Capture all the police you possibly can. Preserve their arms. Take Fort Battle, but save the provisions, munitions and arms. Send a detachment to us of at least one hundred men."

"In a draft letter, also in his handwriting, and proved at the trial, addressed to the French and English Métis from Battle River to Fort Pitt, the following expressions are found:

"We will help you to take Fort Battle and Fort Pitt. * * * Try and have the news which we send to you conveyed as soon as possible to the Métis and Indians at Fort Pitt. Tell them to be on their guard; to prepare themselves for everything. * * * Take with you the Indians; gather them together everywhere. Take all the ammunition you can, in whatever stores they may be. Murmur, growl and threaten. Rouse up the Indians."

"I will give a letter addressed by Poundmaker and others to Louis Riel, dated Cut Knife, April 29th, 1885, it reads as follows:

220 St. Louis Riel:

"I want to hear news of the progress of God's work. If any event has occurred since your messengers came away, let me know of it. Tell me the date when the Americans will reach the Canadian Pacific Railway. Tell me all the news that you have heard from all places where your work is in progress. Big Bear has finished his work; he has taken Fort Pitt. If you want me to come to you let me know at once," he said, and I sent for him at once. I will be four days on the road. Those who have gone to see him will sleep twice on the road. They took twenty prisoners, including the master of Fort Pitt. They killed eleven men, including the agent, two priests and six white men. We are camped on the creek just below Cut Knife Hill, waiting for Big Bear. The Blackfeet have killed sixty police at the Elbow. A half-breed who interpreted for the police, having survived the fight, though wounded, brought this news. Here we have killed six white men. We have not taken the barracks yet, but that is the only entire building in Battleford. All the cattle and horses in the vicinity we have taken. We have lost one man, a Nes Pereé, killed, he being alone and one wounded. Some soldiers have come from Swift Current, but I don't know their number. We have here guns and rifles of all sorts, but ammunition for them is short. If it be possible, send us ammunition of various kinds. We are weak only for the want of that. You sent word that you would come to Battleford when you had finished your work at Duck Lake. We wait still for you, as we are unable to take the fort without help. If you send us news, send only one messenger. We are impatient to reach you. It would encourage us much to see you, and make us work more heartily. Up to the present everything has gone well with us, but we are constantly expecting the soldiers to visit us here. We trust that God will be as kind to us, in the future as He has been in the past. We, the undersigned, send greeting to you all.

(Signed),

"POUNDMAKER,
"OOPINQW-WAY-WIN,
"MISSINAB,
"MEE-YAY-WAY-IS,
"PEE-YAY-OHEW."

McKay, another witness, also said:

"He, Riel, became very excited and said: 'You don't know what we are doing! It is blood! blood! We want blood! It is a war of extermination. Everybody is against us is to be driven out of the country. There were two curses in the country, the Government and the Hudson Bay Company.'

"Q. Yes?—A. He turned to me and said I was a traitor to his Government. That I was a speculator and a scoundrel and robber and thief, and I don't know what all.

"Q. He used very violent language to you?—A. Yes. He finally said, 'Blood, and the first blood they wanted was mine. There were some little dishes on the table, and he got hold of a spoon and said: 'You have no blood, you are a traitor to your people; your blood is frozen, and all the little blood you have will be there in five minutes,' putting the spoon up to my face and pointing to it."

Same witness said as to Nolin and Boyer when they refused to take up arms:

"Q. What was the chief event of that day as far as you can remember?—A. He was giving orders to go and take William Boyer and Charles Nolin prisoners."

"Q. Did you hear him say why they were to be taken prisoner?—A. Because they would not take up arms.

"Q. Did he say anything about because they had been movers up to that time?—A. Because they had been movers, and had left it at the time of taking up arms."

"Q. Was Nolin tried?—A. About his trial I cannot say exactly, I heard him saying he ought to be shot or that they should shoot him.

"Q. You understood Nolin and Boyer were to be shot?—A. Yes, both of them."

"Q. And because they would not join the movement in taking up arms?—A. In not taking up arms."

But I will go further, and quote what the *Globe* said on the 4th August, 1885:

"The trial for which Riel has been convicted is one of the most dreadful that can be imagined. It has cost the lives of two hundred Canadians, and has caused cruel maiming and crippling of probably twice that number. Had his efforts against an Indian rising been more successful, the white residents in the North-West would all probability have been subjected to outrages more dreadful and horrible than can be imagined. It was of the essence of Riel's crime, that he knew what the Indians were capable of, and what atrocities they would probably commit when their savage nature was thoroughly excited. The *Free Press* is right in declaring that nothing of which half-breeds had to complain could justify Riel's conduct, and that the crime of which he was convicted is perhaps the most heinous that could be conceived. No one who has read the evidence can doubt that Riel richly deserves death."

On March 26th, 1885, the *Globe* said:

"If such crimes as are reputed have been committed, it will perhaps be necessary that the leaders, at least, should be punished. But what is to be done with Riel this time? He, it seems, incited the people to revolt. He, it is said, led those who have committed so many grave offences. Shall we again have a price set on his head?"

You will remember I have already given you in that important document published in the Propaganda of the faith that Riel had sent messages to the poor savages on the prairie, &c.

We will give further the statement of the Reverend Mr. Quinney, a Missionary of the Church of England, stationed at Onion Lake. This reverend gentleman's report was published in the *Canadian Missionary*, and is in the Sessional Paper of 1886, vol. XIX, No. 4:

"As regards the late uprising I have no hesitation in saying that I do not believe the Indians would never have rebelled but for half-breeds' influence through Riel. Several times last winter the chief of Onion Lake told me of Big Bear's visit to Riel; how he was taken into a large upper room, grandly furnished, and invited to sit down to table with the latter. When the Indian expressed surprise, said: 'Yes, my brother, this is a nice house, these are nice things, and I have plenty to eat, but, if you do as I tell you, you will have a grander house, better things to eat, I am poor, but you will be rich. They call you chief now, but I will make you something. By and by you will be a chief in reality, and what I say to you I say to my brother chiefs, and I want you to tell them my words when you go back.' Then he got Big Bear to sign a paper, promising to obey all future orders Riel should give."

to help him in his contemplated fight with the white man. Our chief said he also signed the same paper, which Riel sent round by Big Bear to all the chiefs. Big Bear said, whilst we were in his camp, that he was acting under Riel's orders when he killed the white men."

To this I may add the resolution passed by the North-West Council, which reads as follows:

"Whereas public meetings have been held in certain portions of the Dominion at which it was sought to condemn the Dominion Government for allowing the sentence of the court to be carried into effect in the case of Louis Riel, who had stirred up rebellion among the half-breeds and Indians in these Territories, and who, after a fair and impartial trial by a competent tribunal was convicted of high treason;

"And, whereas, the peace, progress and prosperity of these Territories would have been jeopardised and a feeling of insecurity would have been caused among the settlers had the man, twice guilty of rebellion, and who had not shrunk from the terrible responsibility of exciting the half-breeds and Indians to armed insurrection been permitted to escape the just penalty of his misdeeds;

"And, whereas, a fair, firm and impartial administration of the law must be had if the laws of our country are to be respected by all classes irrespective of nationality;

"This Council desires to place on record its endorsement of the action of the Dominion Government in allowing the sentence of the court on Louis Riel to be carried into effect."

I will close this array of evidence against charge No. 3 by giving an extract from Mr. Justice Richardson's address when pronouncing the sentence on Riel.

"You have been found guilty of high treason, you have been proved to have let loose the flood-gates of rapine and bloodshed; you have, with such assistance as you had in the Saskatchewan country, managed to arouse the Indians, and have brought ruin and misery to many families, whom, if you had simply left alone, were in comfort, and many of them on the road to affluence.

Now, I will only ask, if with all this evidence, could Riel be treated as a political offender? Could he be otherwise treated than a man whose own selfish end had prompted him to cause so much bloodshed. No unbiased mind can say but that he deserved the punishment he received.

The fourth and last charge that Mr. Blake, Mr. Laurier and their friends made against the Government in connection with this poor man is, that he was of unsound mind and ought therefore to receive Her Majesty's royal clemency. I cannot see how this can for a moment be entertained. Medical testimony of the highest order was given at the court as to his sanity; and to satisfy the Government more fully on that point, besides the gratification it ought to give the public, as the press of a certain class had raised the question of insanity, the Government sent three medical experts of undoubted ability to examine him a few days before his execution. Moreover, so clearly was he proved to be sane and responsible for his acts, that his counsel in the Superior Court in Manitoba, and at the Privy Council in England, abandoned entirely the plea of insanity. I have, under every charge, given proofs that ought to be satisfactory to the most biased, and this, to my mind is as conclusive as any, establishing beyond a doubt that the Government could not possibly entertain that claim. I will give the medical testimony at the trial. Dr. Daniel Clarke, Superintendent of the Medical Asylum at Toronto, who was brought there by the prisoner's own counsel, said in answer to the question:

"Q. Do you consider from the knowledge which you now have of this individual that at the time the events detailed by the witnesses here took place, that is to say, in March, April and May last, that he was laboring under such a defect of reason from disease of the mind, that he did not know that what he was doing was wrong?—A. I think he did know; I think he was quite capable of distinguishing right from wrong."

"Q. You cannot say that it is not fraud? A. I cannot."

"Q. And there is nothing here to show you, in the state of his intellect, that he was not able to distinguish between right and wrong, and know the quality of the act which he was committing? A. No, I say that I think that he knows what right is."

from wrong, subject to his delusions; But, mind you, I want to add to that, that ~~insane~~ of the insane know right from wrong."

Then, Dr. James M. Wallace, Medical Superintendent of the Insane Asylum at Hamilton, who was brought there by the Crown, said when asked:

"Have you been listening to the evidence in this case? A. Yes.

"Have you examined or had an opportunity of seeing the prisoner? A. I saw him for about half an hour; that is, alone, not in court.

"And you have been here during the—? A. During the sitting of the court.

"Have you formed an opinion of his mental responsibility, of his sanity or insanity? A. I have so far as my time and opportunities enabled me to do so.

"Q. What is that opinion? A. I have not discovered any insanity about him, no indication of insanity.

"What would you say then in view of the evidence and your examination of him of sound mind or is he not? A. I think he is of sound mind.

"Q. And capable of distinguishing right from wrong? A. I think so.

"Q. And know the nature and quality of any act which he would commit? A. Very acutely."

The *Globe* of the 22nd October, 1885, says as to his insanity:

"As to the prisoner's guilt of the highest crime that can be laid to a man, there has been no shadow of doubt since his letter to Poundmaker was produced. Nor as to his sanity has there been any doubt since the jury having heard the evidence, decided that Riel was responsible."

I will give an extract from Dr. Howard, the Medical Superintendent of a Lunatic Asylum in Quebec, who well knew Louis Riel. It is from a letter dated the 14th of March 1886, to Mr. Curran, the member for Montreal centre. I may explain that he was asked to go and give evidence at the trial of Riel to show that he was insane, but did not. The reason will be apparent from this extract:

"I think it well to say, however, that in my opinion, my presence at the trial could not possibly have done Riel any good. You know my views on the question of responsibility. But when it came to the legal test, I should have been obliged to say that Riel was as responsible for his acts as any other criminal man.

"Yours sincerely,

"HENRY HOWARD,

"Medical Superintendent, Asylum St. Jean de Dieu."

Then again, Dr. F. X. Perrault, the attending physician in Longue Pointe Asylum where Riel was for a brief period detained, testified:

"I, the undersigned, physician of the asylum of St. Jean de Dieu, certify that a few days after the entrance of Louis Riel into this asylum I perceived that his insanity was simulated. The exaggeration of his acts was such and so much that what we generally remark in subjects affected with real insanity, that with a person accustomed to treat such cases, there would be no room for doubt. Upon making the observation to him that I was not to be taken for his dupe, he confessed to me that he was shamming the insanity. And the evidence that I was right in my opinion was that his confession was really sincere is, that on all occasions, and they were many, I have been alone conversing with him, he has always talked in a manner lucid and sane upon all and every subject with which he has entertained me."

"F. X. PERRAULT, M.D.,

"Asylum of Longue Pointe."

The certificate of Dr Brunelle, who had known Riel in Montreal as well as in the United States, is just as convincing. That well known physician testified as follows:

"I, the undersigned, certify that during the time Louis Riel was confined at Beauport and afterwards, that I had known him particularly both in Montreal and in the United States, and during the time he was confined at Beauport and afterwards, I have been able to ascertain on divers occasions that outside the eccentricities in his manner which were little to be noticed, he was perfectly lucid in his mind and sane in his intellect, and spoke absolutely well on all subjects when he was not observed. Moreover, that in my presence the said Louis Riel has been simulating insanity."

a manner as to leave no doubt in my mind as to the character of his pretended insanity."

I will follow this by the certificates of the three medical experts before referred to, who were sent to Regina subsequent to the trial, to report upon Riel's mental capacity:

Dr. A. Jukes to Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney.

"REGINA, N.W.T., 8th November, 1885.

"Sir,—In compliance with the request contained in a communication received by you from the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, that I should report without delay upon the mental condition of the prisoner, Louis Riel, now under my medical care, and how far I consider him accountable and responsible for his acts, I have the honor to report as follows:

"Louis Riel has been under my especial care, medically, as surgeon of this force, for upwards of five months since his arrival here as a prisoner. During that time I have visited him, with few exceptions, every day, have studied him closely and conversed with him long and frequently. I have personally a strong aversion to punishment by death. I believe that failing to establish his insanity his death is near at hand, but after careful and continuous examinations of him under varying circumstances from day to day, I cannot escape the conviction that except upon certain purely religious questions, having relation to what may be called Divine mysteries, he was when first entrusted to my care, and still continues to be, perfectly sane and accountable for his actions.

"Under these circumstances my duty, though a painful one, is clear, and my opinion not hastily formed, equally so, viz. that Riel's peculiar views upon religious subjects which so strongly impress the ignorant and unreflecting with an idea of his madness, cannot rightly be regarded as interfering with or obscuring in the slightest degree his clear perception of duty, or as rendering his judgment less sound in the affairs of everyday life. I therefore record my opinion that, with the reservation above made, Riel is a sane, clear-headed and accountable being, and responsible for his actions before God and man:

"I have, &c.,

"A. JUKES, Senior Surgeon."

The Hon. EDGAR DEWDNEY, Lieutenant-Governor, N. W. T.

Dr. Valade to Sir John A. Macdonald.

"REGINA, N.W.T., 8th November, 1885.

"Sir,—After having examined carefully Riel, in private conversation with him and by testimony of persons who take care of him, I have come to the conclusion that he suffers under hallucinations on political and religious subjects, but on other points I believe him to be quite sensible and can distinguish right from wrong.

"F. X. VALADE, M.D."

Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD, G.C.B., Premier of Canada, Ottawa.

Dr. Laxell to Sir John A. Macdonald.

"REGINA, N.W.T., 8th November, 1885.

"Sir,—I have the honor to report that after giving conscientious consideration to the case of Louis Riel, now confined here, under sentence of death, and fully appreciating the trust committed to me and all the consequences involved, I am of the opinion that the said Louis Riel, although holding and expressing foolish and peculiar views as to religion and general government, is an accountable being and capable of distinguishing right from wrong.

I have, &c.

"M. LAXELL, M.D."

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD, G.C.B., Premier of Canada, Ottawa.

"I will now give the opinions of the three Judges of the Superior Court in Manitoba. The Learned Chief Justice said, in delivering his judgment:

"I have carefully read the evidence, and it appears to me that the jury could not

reasonably have come to any other conclusion than the verdict of guilty; there is only evidence to support the verdict, but it vastly preponderates."

And again he said:

"I think the evidence upon the question of insanity shows that the prisoner knows that he was acting illegally, and that he was responsible for his acts."

Mr. Justice Taylor says:

"After a critical examination of the evidence, I find it impossible to come to any other conclusion than that at which the jury did. The appellant is beyond all doubt a man of inordinate vanity, excitable, irritable, and impatient of contradiction. He seems at times to have acted in an extraordinary manner, to have said many things, and to have entertained, or at least professed to entertain, absurd ideas on religious and political subjects. But it all stops far short of establishing such a want of mind as would render him irresponsible and not accountable for his actions. His course of conduct indeed shows in many ways, that the whole of this extraordinary conduct, his claims to Divine inspiration and prophetic character, was only a part of a commonly devised scheme to gain and hold influence and to secure personal immunity in the eyes of the simple-minded people around him, and to secure personal immunity in the eyes of the ever being called to account for his acts. He seems to have had in view, while professing to champion the cause of the Metis, the securing of pecuniary advantage to himself."

Mr. Justice Killam, who before his appointment to the Bench, was a distinguished member of the Reform party, said:

"The argument for the insanity of the prisoner is based to a certain extent on the idea that he was in such a state of mind that he did not know that the acts he was committing were wrong; that he fancied himself inspired of heaven, and acted under the direction of heaven, and in holy cause. It would be exceedingly dangerous to admit the validity of such an argument for adjudging an accused person insane, especially where the offence charged is of such a nature as that of which this prisoner was convicted. A man who leads an armed insurrection does so from a desire for plunder, rapine, robbery, or for personal gain or advantages of some kind, or he does so on the belief that he has a righteous cause, grievances which he is entitled to take up and have redressed. In the latter case, if sincere, he believes it to be right to do so, and the law of God permits, nay, even calls upon him, to do so, and to adjudge a man innocent on that ground, would be to open the door to an acquittal in every case in which a man with an honest belief in his wrongs, and that they were sufficiently grievous to warrant any means to secure their redress, should take up arms against the constituted authorities of the land. His action was exceedingly rash and foolhardy, but he reasoned that he could achieve a sufficient success to extort something from the Government, whether for himself or his followers. His actions were based on reasons and not on insane delusion."

In the rendering of the judgment in England on the Riel matter, one of the Lords of the Privy Council said:

"The jury before whom the prisoner was tried, negatived that defence (insanity) and no argument has been presented to their Lordships to show that that finding was otherwise than correct."

Sir A. Campbell says in his report as to Riel's mental state as follows:

"Finally, under this head, as regards the mental state of the prisoner, the trial and before execution, careful enquiry was made into this question by medical experts employed confidentially by the Government for that purpose, and nothing was elicited showing any change in his mental powers or casting any doubt upon his perfect knowledge of his crime, or justifying the idea that he had not such mental capacity as to know the nature and quality of the act for which he was convicted, as to know that his act was wrong, and as to be able to control his own conduct."

The *Globe* on the 6th July, 1885, said:

"If, as some say, he is insane, there is much method in his madness. The defence than he has fully outlined it would be impossible for his lawyer to..."

The same paper said on the 25th July, 1885:

"Although this document (Riel's diary) is an interesting one, it will give no aid or comfort to those who build up the hopes of the writer's release on an insanity plea. Very much the reverse. If all who are mentally astray, only as these jottings indicate that Riel is, were shut up in one asylum, we should increase the capacity of these institutions very considerably."

This finishes the different heads under which I put the charges made against the Government, and I have not a word to say except to ask an intelligent and unbiassed public to weigh them carefully and ask themselves the reason why, in the face of such overwhelming and convincing evidence against Riel, such a cry as this is raised about him. The answer is obvious, and it is because there is no ground for the accusation, that I have taken the liberty of placing before you this lengthy collection of evidence upon the subject. Near the beginning of this address I said that Mr. Blake and his friends were ready to see this Riel question whatever fate befell this poor man. If the Government had commuted his sentence to imprisonment for life, the cry would have been "Sir John Macdonald, true to his record, has again violated every true principle of fair play to serve the Blues of Quebec;" but Riel having been hanged, the turn is changed, and they say, "Sir John has done this to appease the wrath of the Orangeman and avenge the death of Scott."

Read the following, in answer to the cry of Orange influence to have Riel executed:

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Tuesday, 18th November, 1885.

Mr. TAYLOR asked:—1st. Were any, and how many, petitions sent by Orange Lodges to the Government praying that the sentence of death passed upon Louis Riel for high treason be not commuted; and, if any, from what lodge and where situated. And. Were any, and how many, copies of resolution sent to the Government, passed by either the Grand Orange Lodge, district, county or private lodge to the same effect; and if any, by what lodge and where were they located.

Hon. Mr. CHAPLEAU.—There have been no petitions sent by the Orange Lodge to the Government. There have been no copies of resolution sent to the Government, passed by either the Grand Orange Lodge, or by district or county lodge, to the same effect. The only things which have come to the department over which I preside are a letter from a member of Parliament transmitting certain representations from an Orange Lodge, two petitions from the Northwest transmitted by Nicholas Flood Davin, and a private letter from a person named Charles O'Hara, of Cranbourn, Quebec, which I lay before the House.

This completely refutes any charge of Orange influence.

I will give a few extracts from Reform papers, to show how they endeavored to trim their sails to take advantage of the wind most favorable to their course, and I will commence with the *Globe*. It said before the execution:—

"The French Blues rule Sir John's actions to a greater extent than is generally supposed. They are jealous of the progress, wealth and importance of well-governed Ontario."

After the execution, the same paper said:—

"The greatest enemies of Ontario have never been the French Blues, though they have often been so represented."

The *Port Hope Guide*, a Reform paper, said before the execution of Riel:

"It has come to a pretty pass indeed, when a red-handed rebel can thus snap his fingers at the law."

The same paper said after the execution:

"It has come to a pretty pass indeed, that in the noontide glare of this nineteenth century, political offenders must suffer death if they dare to assert their just rights."

The *Brandon Sun*, another Reform paper, said before the execution:

"Riel has been found worthy of death by the courts and highest tribunals in the land; and yet the Government, for base purposes, intervene and prevent the just execution of penalties prescribed by laws of their own making."

The same paper said after the execution:

"And now, the wholesale hanging of Her Majesty's subjects who were provoked into hostilities by the horrible mis-management and neglect of those entrusted and sworn to guard their lives and property and interests, will close the terrible drama."

The *Ottawa Free Press*, a Reform paper, said before the execution, and you know how far it goes for the party:

"Louis Riel knew well the nature of the Indian, and that with them the wages

of war were revolting in civilized eyes. When Riel conspired with the Indians, he opened the gates of rapine and murder, and for that offence deserved the penalty possible."

The same paper after the execution said:

"The execution of Louis Riel, which took place this morning, will be above a State lynching."

The *Belleville Ontario*, another important Reform paper, said before the execution: "Not only as a traitor to Canada and her institutions, the murderer of the innocent but as the deadly deceiver of an ignorant though brave community, Louis Riel deserves the penalty affixed to his offence—that penalty is death."

After the execution, the same paper said:

"He was tried, eminent jurists claimed that the court was competent to put on trial for treason, not a capital offence for the past fifty years. He was found guilty, and the jury with a knowledge of the circumstances of the case and the ability of the Government added to their verdict a recommendation for mercy. A commendation practically meant that in the judgment of that jury, the punishment was justified to the extent that a life sentence and not capital punishment should be imposed."

Again the *Port Hope Guide* said before the execution, to put down French influence and favor the Ontario Grits:

"If the rebel leader is not hanged, it will be because Sir John Macdonald is not go in opposition to the Frenchmen of Quebec."

After the execution, to court the French Blues:

"We are firmly of the opinion that the consideration of whether he was right or wrong, did not actuate the policy of the Government, but because they felt that the thing had to be done to weld the rank and file of their followers, to the political branch of the Orange order."

To come nearer home, the *Glengarry Review*, now extinct, but during its life dealing out the bitterest poison to Sir John and his followers, editorially stated on May 29th, 1885:

"There is a feeling abroad that justice will miscarry on the Riel case, and that the professional fomentor of rebellion will be a second time under the wing of the Premier, under pressure of his French supporters."

"He has rendered desolate many a Canadian home, and he has led in a list of horrible atrocities, therefore, it is that Canadian public opinion demands his execution, justice decrees it, humanity commands it, and public policy ordains it."

"The trial has been had with commendable promptness, yet not with undue haste. The counsel for the prisoner were able men who ably conducted the offence. Every production of evidence favorable to Riel was accorded; an impartial jury sat upon the case. There was an entire absence of appeal to bigotry, prejudice, or local sentiment, in a word British judgment prevailed, and the accused has been found guilty of treason. The evidence of guilt was overwhelming; indeed, there was no serious attempt made to combat the testimony produced on behalf of the Crown, and the only plea entered for the prisoner was that of insanity. Upon this point the evidence of the experts were contradictory, but the weight of opinions inclined to his sanity, and that view the jury had taken."

"The Government will doubtless receive a number of petitions for his pardon, and will probably be asked for the appointment of a commission of experts to determine his sanity, but in view of the proceedings at the trial, there can be but one conviction in the public mind, namely, that the verdict is in strict accordance with the evidence, and that justice has prevailed."

But to-day some of the men who not only inspired the above, but who were it, are stumping Glengarry for the Reform candidate in this county, telling the corner whispers that Riel was hanged because he was French, and because he was a traitor."

The above are a few extracts of the hundreds which could be obtained from the press of the Reform party if such were necessary, but I have given enough to show the inincerity and transparency of their utterances. They were bound, right or wrong, to be against the Government.

The Cabinet of Sir John Macdonald is composed of gentlemen of the highest

honor, integrity and ability. The very height of their ambition is to preserve those qualities in the most scrupulous manner, and to see to the administration of laws for the "safety and equal government" of the people of Canada. It is composed of seven Protestants and six Catholics; the largest representation of Catholics ever in the Cabinet of Canada, three of whom are French; and I ask if any reasonable man can believe that Orange influence had the slightest effect upon their minds, if it were used at all, and I say to the credit of the Orangemen, there is no evidence to show that it was. I say, if it were used, those six gentlemen, as the representatives of the Catholic body, would never have consented to the execution of Riel because of that influence, or because he was a Catholic and a Frenchman, but would rather have retired from the important positions which they occupy. The thing is too absurd, and unworthy of the consideration of any intelligent person, unless he has an object in thinking and preaching differently.

The supremacy of the law must be maintained, equal justice must be "administered to all," irrespective of creed or nationality, knowing no distinction between "the king and the beggar," if we want to live in a well governed country.

It is therefore our duty to preserve that spirit of justice as lovers of our country, and when we find our Government assailed as it has been in this case; its leader, Sir John Macdonald and his French associates burnt in effigy, giving them the epithets of Changmen, and otherwise abused, it will stir up and arouse to duty every true Canadian in whose breast beats that love of home and country, that is characteristic of those noble races from which we all sprung. These are the motives that prompt me to address you at such length, and I offer them, therefore, as my apology.

Before concluding I may be pardoned if I refer to the Riel question in our own county, for I am aware that it is secretly used by the candidate and his friends as a most important weapon to prejudice the electors of one nationality, while it dare not be mentioned to another. This is unfair and unmanly.

Him they seek to slay with poison
Whom they dare not face with steel.

Let the question be discussed openly on a public platform, and he who fears to do so does not deserve to be heard in secret. The truth does not require the aid of darkness and justice demands fair and open discussion.

I am, your most obedient and humble servant,

DONALD McMILLAN.

Alexandria, 14th January, 1887.

P.S.—The necessity of giving extracts and proofs so largely occurred in conversation with many people and addressing meetings on the Riel subject. Hence the reason no more original matter is given in many places than is absolutely necessary to connect the testimony adduced, and make it readable.—D. McM.